

REMARKS

The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the Office Action issued on March 31, 2006. By this response, claims 1, 2 and 11 are cancelled without prejudice, claims 3, 6, 7 and 10 are amended, and claims 12-17 are newly presented. No new matter is added. Claim 5 was previously cancelled without prejudice. Claims 3, 4, 6-10 and 12-17 are now active for examination.

The Office Action rejected claims 2-4 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Claims 1, 2, 6 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 01305967. Claims 7-10 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but the Examiner indicated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Examiner further indicated that claims 3 and 4 would be allowable if they are rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph, and made to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

It is respectfully submitted that the claim objections are addressed, and the claim rejections are overcome or rendered moot, in view of the amendments and/or remarks presented herein. Favorable reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

The Rejections of Claims 1, 2 and 11 Are Moot

By this Response, claims 1, 2 and 11 are cancelled without prejudice. Accordingly, the rejections of claims 1, 2 and 11 are now moot.

The Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph Is Overcome

The Office Action rejected claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner suggested that the phrase “naturalize static electricity” should be amended to “neutralizing.” By this Response, the claims are amended as suggested by the Examiner. It is believed that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph is overcome.

Claims 3, 4 and 7-10 Are Allowable

Claims 7-10 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but the Examiner indicated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this Response, claims 7 and 10 are rewritten into independent form, as suggested by the Examiner. It is submitted that claims 7 and 10 are now in condition for allowance. Claims 8 and 9 depend on claim 7. Accordingly, claims 8 and 9 also are patentable.

The Examiner further indicated that claims 3 and 4 would be allowable if they are rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this response, claim 3 is rewritten to include all limitations from claims 1 and 2, with minor revisions to improve wording and avoid repetition of descriptions. It is submitted that claim 3 is now in condition for allowance. Claim 4 depends on claim 3 and hence is patentable by virtue of its dependency from claim 3.

Claim 6 Is Allowable

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 01305967. By this Response, claim 6 is amended to depend from allowable claim 3. Accordingly, claim 6, after the amendment, is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of claim 6 is respectfully requested.

New Claims 12-17 Are Patentable

By this Response, claims 12-17 are newly presented. Claim 12 is a means-plus-function claim parallel to claim 7. Since claim 7 is in condition for allowance, claim 12 should be allowable for at least the same reasons as for claim 7.

Claims 13-17 depend on claims 4 and 7-10, respectively, and include additional feature similar to that of claim 6. Since claims 4 and 7-10 are in condition for allowance, claims 13-17 also are patentable.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that this application is in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to give the application favorable reconsideration and permit it to issue as a patent. If the Examiner believes that the application can be put in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representatives listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper,

including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

McDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP



Wei-Chen Nicholas Chen
Registration No. 56,665

600 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-3096
Phone: 202.756.8000 WNC:ct
Facsimile: 202.756.8087
Date: June 29, 2006

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